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Pathways to parenting: Understanding addiction, incarceration and parenting

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Abstract

For past twenty years, there has been an increase in the number of parents incarcerated as a result of drug addiction and drug related criminal activity. The goal of this paper is 1) to discuss the incarceration rates of parents, including information on parental demographics (i.e. race, gender/sex), and how the U.S. incarceration rates of parents compares with the international incarceration rates of parents, 2) to discuss the effects of parental incarceration on young children and adolescents, 3) to present the findings from our current multi-method research project examining the parenting challenges that mothers encounter upon their release from the criminal justice system and 4) to offer suggestions for interventions and programming for this population of parents and their children.

Biography

Yvette R. Harris, Ph.D., an associate Professor of psychology at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, USA received her Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Florida with a specialization in cognitive development. For the past 20 years, her research has focused on exploring the environmental contributions to preschool and school age cognitive development, and more recently has taken on applied focus examining the learning/teaching patterns of African American mothers transitioning from welfare to work and the challenges of family reunification as mothers reenter from prison. She has presented her work at both national and international conferences, her research has appeared in a variety of educational and developmental journals, and her work has been funded by the National Science Foundation, Proctor and Gamble, Miami University, and the Harvard/Radcliffe Murray Research Center. She has co-authored four textbooks: The African American Child Development and Challenges, Children of African Origin: A Guide for Educators and Caregivers, Developmental Science: An Introductory Approach, and Children of Incarcerated Parents, Theoretical, Developmental and Clinical Implications. She has discussed her work on NPR, Voice America, Heroes at Home and Knowledge for Life, and has conducted parenting classes for a diverse audience of parents and community leaders, and she is a consulting editor for Early Childhood Research Quarterly.

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